1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

those who are supposed to have been born into the sea cycle of totemic wells. All divide further into groups according to the wells to which they belong. All the names of the old men who belong to these wells (mythological people usually) are called out. The leader calls his own marikmo, muri, and similar relatives last. When this is done, all go into the water, one clan at a time. They swim, completely immerse themselves, and wash their faces and bodies. When the leader says "Ka-war!" they stand up. When he calls out "Ka-war!" again they once more swim and wash themselves. The leader takes each crowd and again calls out the names of its grandfathers (patrilineal line). This is continued until he has come to his own well. Everybody returns to the ground where the ring of women were. Four or more men dance the crocodile and another group dances a small fish; these two groups are fresh-water fish and crocodiles going out into the sea.

Native Interpretation.—"That fresh water is carrying sticks and leaves down from the bush and it leaves it in a line [the spears of the men dancers]. When everybody dances back and forth that means that fresh-water flood takes the leaves down to the shore and the salt water carries them back. We put the spears down because that salt water leaves all that log and sticks and leaves on the shore when the heavy flood brings it down when the creeks are high."

The cry of "kawar" is supposed to be the sound made by a duck when it is diving. The people are ducks and they are diving down into their ranga well water. These ducks, say the leaders of the ceremony, are just the same as younger brothers to the wells to which they belong. It means, too, they say, that it is just the same as garrawark or any other Yiritja ranga diving in his well.

1. The Low Totems Are Shown

The leader then says, "We will take all our food that the women have gathered and go into the Narra place. We won't eat our food here, but we will wait and go there." When they arrive at the totemic grounds the men put their opossum string on their beards. The leader then says to certain of the men, "You take the garrawark totemic emblem, and you take barrimundi, but don't bring out any of the high rangas. You must leave them there because those rangas look out for that ground. They are too far down inside the well for the young men to see." Each totemic group brings out its own rangas which belong to the lower order. The Warumeri will bring out the totems listed as

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Oll7 Murngin Oll7

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

The Fresh-water Goanna, Bije, and Yellow Ochre

At Guruŋga, Caledon Bay, the mythical fresh-water goannas, *bije*, when digging out their nesting burrows, discovered both black and yellow ochres. During creation times a *jiritja* mythical man, *W'irili*, also excavated the ochres with a digging stick. When the men of the *jiritja* moiety go to Guruŋga to collect these ochres they must approach the totemic place by crawling along the ground and, while digging out the ochre, use only a special ceremonial stick, called *kainina*.

On Pl. 118A the vertical lines of lozenge-like designs[38] symbolize the yellow ochre at Guruŋga. At *a*, and *b*, in the lower panel, are two digging sticks, *kainina*, which in mythical times were used only by the man *W'irili* and today only by the men of the *jiritja* moiety when digging for ochre. *W'irili*'s tracks are shown at *c*, on the lower right. In the next panel, *d*, is a large tree, *gùnjo*, in whose branches a night-bird, *kurnuk*,[39] is eating the fruit of the tree. Beside the trunk of the tree is the fresh-water goanna, *bije*, which once dug for ochre in the same place as the man, *W'irili*. The central cross-hatched band, *e*, is a hole in the cliff where *W'irili* was unsuccessful in his search for ochre.

Plate 118C shows the goanna, *bije*, at the bottom of the painting. Above and on either side of the reptile the designs represent the black and yellow ochres. The two ceremonial digging sticks are shown on the extreme right and extreme left of the lower panel.

Plate 118D pictures six mythical fresh-water goannas, *bije*, which lived at Guruŋga, Caledon Bay.

Plate 118B is a bark painting from Milingimbi which depicts ten fresh-water goannas, *bije*, at Guruŋga. This painting is included to show the stability of this totemic design over a wide area.

The Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimalu, at Kulwitji Lagoon, Koolatong River

The *jiritja* mythical fresh-water tortoise, *mimalu*, has a number of totemic places in north-eastern Arnhem Land. One myth, engraved on a smoking pipe, Fig. 59D, deals with *mimalu* at Calabalkai, south of Milingimbi. Others deal with a painted cudlin, Pl. 105B (*mimalu* at Milingimbi); a painted bull-roarer, Pl. 144A, B (*mimalu* at Diawirinja, west of Arnhem Bay); a Milingimbi bark painting, Pl. 126A (*mimalu* at Jaraga, a forest area near Arnhem Bay), and the subject of this painting from the Kulwitji lagoon on the Koolatong River. The most complete myth is that associated with the engraved pipe, p. 391.

This painting, Pl. 119A, deals with the totemic lagoon of *mimalu* at Kulwitji. In panel *a* is the fresh-water tortoise, the meandering lines at its tail being the wake it creates when swimming. The diamonds and dots occupying the rest of the panel are the bubbles rising to the surface of the water as the tortoise feeds

38. This is one of the designs of the *gumaitj mata*, Fig. 61M.
39. Myth of *kurnuk*, the night-bird, and the opossum, p. 362.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OB17 Murngin OB17

(8) The Art of Milingimbi

The Rev. Arthur F. Ellemor made a small collection of Milingimbi bark paintings for the expedition, together with simple but incomplete interpretations. This collection was valuable because it shows that the art of Milingimbi, on the west of north-eastern Arnhem Land, and that of Yirrkalla on the east, are similar both in design and mythological content.

The Wild Honey, Koko

The honey of the stingless bee is one of the few sweet foods in the aborigines' menu. Many hours are spent searching for this food and a great deal of labour expended climbing the trees and cutting out the hives. Four bark paintings[66] were collected dealing with the mythical wild-honey ancestors of Milingimbi.

Plate 125C is associated with a mythical wild-honey woman, called *Birikuta*, whose camp was on the mainland south of Elcho Island. This site is a totemic place of the wild honey, *koko*. The painting is a conventionalized representation of a hive of wild bees, the projection from the upper edge being the 'nose' or entrance to the hive, and the central disc, the beeswax. The cross-hatched diamond-shaped patterns covering the bulk of the painting represent the honey comb, the white lines forming the margins of the various cells, the beeswax, and the dotted diamonds the eggs and young bees in the nursery cells.

Plate 125A is another painting of a hive of wild honey. The symbolism is similar to that in C, except that the artist has shown four entrances to the hive.

Plate 125D pictures *koko's* totemic place at Murnarambul, near Arnhem Bay. The three transverse panels, *a*, *a*, *a*, and the vertical cross-hatched one, *b*, refer to logs lying on the ground near Murnarambul, in which there are hives of wild bees. Within the design made by these four logs are hives of wild bees. These hives are pictured with the same symbols as those in A and C, the two long triangular projections at the top of the painting being entrances to the hive.

Plate 125B is another painting of a hive of wild bees, using the traditional symbolism to show the wax, honey, eggs and young bees. The long rectangular design in the middle of the bark painting is a hollow tree in which there is a hive of bees, the honey and comb. The hive is again shown at the bottom of the central panel. The entrance or nose of the hive is a long tapering design at the top. The side panels illustrate two more hives.

Mimala, the Fresh-water Tortoise

Plate 126A pictures a forest area near Arnhem Bay, called Jaraga, the totem place of the mythical fresh-water tortoise, *mimala*.[67] Three of these tortoises are shown at the top of the painting, the designs on each carapace representing the water-grass often growing on the backs of these creatures. The three dark-coloured vertical lines, *a*, *a*, *a*, are logs and the four panels of diamond-shaped

66. These designs are similar to those of the *dalwanga mata*, Fig. 61j.

67. *Mimala*, the fresh water tortoise, is also pictured on an engraved smoking pipe, Fig. 90D; on a painted coffin, Pl. 105B; and on another bark painting, Pl. 119A.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

Of aboriginal feet the least said the better; for they definitely give the lie to the theory that protective footwear spoils natural shapeliness. Toes are broken, knobbed, and widely spaced: this is particularly true of the first and second toes, by which they easily grasp and lift spears and large sticks or grip the rigging in climbing to the masthead of a lugger. Hands, however, are beautifully shaped, with long tapering fingers, and compare more favourably with an average European hand.

Finally, aboriginal skin is not black, as is popularly supposed, but is in varying shades of velvety brown, for there are blondes and brunettes in the Arnhem Land bush.

Daily life has not changed in a thousand decades, and still involves hunting with stone and wooden spears and stone axes for everything the nomad eats. Their camp grounds are well known, and are usually found on sandy slopes or beaches, reasonably close to water but as far as possible from the swamps that usually swarm with mosquitoes and sand-flies. A typical instance is 'Damballia' or Breamer Island, favoured for turtle hunting and named after its totemic waterhole. Having heard a lot about it, I set out to see it with some boys in a canoe. I took provisions and water for myself and flour for the boys, but they declined my offer of a drum for water, remarking that the well on the island would supply their needs and mine too.

With a favourable wind and tide we landed on the island at sunrise, and whilst my billy boiled, the boys went off to the well for water. As I was finishing my breakfast I noticed an overpowering smell, and found that it came from the well-water they were using to mix their damper. Even then they steadfastly maintained that it was up to standard, and politely declined some of mine. I found the well to be an open waterhole, completely covered by pandanus palms in which thousands of small doves and other birds were roosting. Nearby were several broken-down huts, and dozens

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

YULENGOR

484 I was awakened by the trilling of a butcher bird, and as the sun tipped the motionless trees we resumed our journey through dew-laden grass. No food had been saved from the night before and sharp eyes were on the look-out for something to eat, but it was not till about ten o'clock that the women cooeed and a halt was made to cook an opossum and two goannas.

The day was uneventful and at sundown we came to a deep crocodile-infested creek about a quarter of a mile wide. As there were no canoes about, I wondered how the crossing [481] was to be made, but without hesitation several youths waded in and swam over with their spears. This is the way all the men would have crossed, but Jirring suggested that he and I wait with my medical equipment and camera till his wives and children arrived with their food and family possessions. They were prepared for the crossing, and had sheets of [501] paper-bark which they stacked in heaps on the water, driving digging-sticks through each stack to hold them together. Small children and bundles of food were then piled on top, older children clung to the sides, and a woman swam beside each pile as she pushed it to the other side. Medicines, camera, and swag were successfully shipped in the same way. Such crossings, with yelping dogs, shrilling women, and squealing children, apparently scare away hungry crocodiles, for they seldom attack, although on this occasion several glided off the mud into the stream as we approached. At dusk we came to the camp of a Blue Mud Bay horde, some distance from the river.

[097] [64] I spent several days in this camp with Yulengor I had not seen before, and was able to treat wounds and ulcers and give hypodermic injections for yaws and gangosa. By day 484 the men stayed under leafy bough shelters, talking, sleeping, 512 and preparing totemic emblems with intricate and artistic 462 designs. Women went food-gathering, and at sundown arrived with loads of firewood and dilly-bags bulging with